

institution in the southeast may be able to provide in response to a request for a loan, it is a duty to send them for study upon request, if for no other reason than the fact that one specimen from this area means much more, perhaps 5 to 15 times as much, as would a specimen, e.g. from Indiana, New York, or Massachusetts.—DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS, GEORGIA.

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NOMENCLATURE OF AMERICAN MOUNTAIN-ASH.—There are two species of native mountain-ash occurring spontaneously in eastern United States. The one with acuminate leaflets and small fruits was first described from Pennsylvania by Marshall in 1785 as *Sorbus americana*. The other species, with acute leaflets and larger fruits, was first described as *S. aucuparia* var. β by Michaux in 1803. Pursh in 1814 treated it as a species, also named *S. americana*. This was transferred to *Pyrus*, as *P. americana*, by De Candolle in 1825. In 1902 it was treated by Sargent as *P. americana* var. *decora*, and in 1906 was raised to specific rank as *Sorbus decora* (Sarg.) Schneider. Although it has been clearly pointed out¹ that *Pyrus americana* DC. does not refer to the same species as *Sorbus americana* Marsh., yet followers of "Gray's Manual of Botany" continue to refer to the American Mountain-ash as *Pyrus americana* (Marsh.) DC.

It is not the purpose in this short article to urge the retention of *Sorbus* for the mountain-ashes, *Pyrus* for pears, or *Malus* for apples (see L. H. Bailey in *Gentes Herbarum* **8**: 40–43, 1949), because the basic morphological facts (see Decaisne in *Nouv.*

¹ *Journ. Arnold Arb.* **20**: 11–16 (1939).

Archiv. Mus. Hist. Nat. Paris **10**: 113–192, 6 plates, 1874) as well as prevailing botanical and horticultural usage for the past two centuries render such advocacy unnecessary. The prime purpose here is to point out to those who wish to treat the American mountain-ash as a pear-tree that there appears to be no choice but to adopt the binomial *P. microcarpa* (Pursh) DC. (1825). The earlier name for this species, *Sorbus micrantha* Dum.-Cours. is unavailable under *Pyrus* because of the existence of *P. micrantha* Franch. & Sav. (1879) for a species of Japan.

In view of the fact that the nomenclatural history of these two species is somewhat involved and is in need of additional clarification, it may be desirable to repeat some of the more important evidence. As previously noted, *Sorbus americana* was first described by Marshall in 1785. While Marshall's description is not as definite as may be desired, there is scarcely any doubt as to the identity of his plant as it is the only native species of *Sorbus* occurring in Pennsylvania, where Marshall had his garden, and from where, presumably, he obtained his specimens. In 1803, Michaux (or his editor), overlooking or ignoring Marshall's work, characterized the two native northeastern American mountain-ashes as varieties α and β of *S. aucuparia* L. The variety α was said to have "foliis acuminatis," and habitat "in excelsis montibus Carolinae." This is obviously *S. americana* Marsh. The var. β was characterized by "foliis sensim acutis," and the habitat "in Canada et circa lacum Ontario." Plainly, this is the northern shrub we now call *S. decora*. In 1809 Willdenow published as a newly named species *S. americana*, citing "*Sorbus aucuparia* Mich." as a synonym and giving the habitat "in montibus excelsis Carolinae," evidently quoting from Michaux. In doing this he possibly was unaware of the earlier publication of *S. americana* Marsh., or at any rate he did not refer to it. The var. α and var. β of Michaux were evidently regarded as identical.

Pursh in 1814 was the first to recognize the fact that there are two separate species native to northeastern North America, each distinct from the European *S. aucuparia* L. The northern plant with acute leaflets and large fruits Pursh called *S. americana*, citing Willd. Enum. Plant. 520, from where he copied the description. To this description, however, he made the important

addition "foliolis acutis," citing *S. aucuparia* var. β Michx. as a synonym, and giving the habitat "In Canada and on some of the northern mountains." All this refers unmistakably to what we now call *S. decora* (Sarg.) Schneid., and confirms the fact that *S. americana* Pursh is not *S. americana* Marsh. It is interesting to note that Pursh appears to have copied from Willdenow the statement "Berries purple, not scarlet as in the European species." Pursh designates the other native eastern North American tree (the one with acuminate leaflets, small fruits, and a more southerly range), by the new name *S. microcarpa*. He cites *S. aucuparia* α Michx. as a synonym, gives the habitat and range "On the peaks of high mountains: New Jersey to Carolina," and adds the comment "This species is very distinct from the Canadian *Sorbus*." i. e., his *americana*, which, as previously pointed out, is *S. decora* (Sarg.) Schneid., but not *S. americana* Marsh. In 1825 A. P. De Candolle transferred these species to *Pyrus*, but the name *Pyrus americana* DC., designating the northern shrub with acute leaflets and large fruits, is based upon *Sorbus americana* Pursh, and therefore is not synonymous with *S. americana* Marsh. It belongs as a synonym of *S. decora*.

The principal bibliography of these two species is as follows:

SORBUS AMERICANA Marsh. Arbust. Am. 145 (1785); Willd. Enum. Pl. 1: 520 (1809), pro parte. *S. aucuparia* var. α Michx. Fl. Bor. Am. 1: 290 (1803). *S. micrantha* Dum.-Cours. Bot. Cult., ed. 2, 5: 464 (1811). *S. microcarpa* Pursh, Fl. Am. Sept. 1: 341 (1814). *Pyrus microcarpa* (Pursh) DC. Prodr. 2: 636 (1825). *Pyrus americana* sensu Watson & Coulter in Gray, Man. Bot., ed. 6, 164 (1889), Robinson & Fernald in op. cit., ed. 7, 459 (1908), Fernald in op. cit., ed. 8, 760 (1950). Non (Pursh) DC. (1825).

SORBUS DECORA (Sarg.) Schneider in Bull. Herb. Boiss. II. 6: 313 (1906). *S. aucuparia* var. β Michx., loc. cit., *S. americana* Willd., loc. cit., pro parte; Pursh, loc. cit. *Pyrus americana* (Pursh) DC., loc. cit. *P. sambucifolia* Watson & Coulter, loc. cit. Non Cham. & Schlecht. (1827). *P. americana* var. *decora* Sarg. Silva N. Am. 14: 101 (1902). *Sorbus americana* var. *decora* Sarg. Man. Trees N. Am. 357 (1905). *Sorbus scopulina* sensu Hough, Handb. Trees U. S. & Canada 241 (1907), Britton in Britton & Brown, Illustr. Fl. N. States, ed. 2, 2: 287 (1913). Non Greene (1900). *Pyrus sitchensis* sensu Robinson & Fernald in Gray, Man. Bot., ed. 7, 459 (1908). Non Piper (1901). *Pyrus dumosa* sensu Fernald in RHODORA 23: 266 (1921). Non *S. dumosa* Greene (1900).—GEORGE NEVILLE JONES, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.